

CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN UPDATE 2009
TRIBAL COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE
Highlights from March 18, 2008, Meeting

The Tribal Communication Committee (TCC) held its sixth meeting on March 18, 2008, in Sacramento. In attendance were ten persons affiliated with Tribal organizations (including two on the telephone), along with staff from the Department of Water Resources and facilitators from the Center for Collaborative Policy. The meeting's objective was to complete the Communication Plan for Tribal outreach for the California Water Plan Update 2009 (CWP).

Participants first reviewed the CWP regional outreach efforts to date, and provided suggestions for improvement. Areas of improvement included outreach to Indians on allotment lands, and earlier regional workshop notification. Kamyar Guivetchi, CWP Program Manager, expects the TCC's final Communication Plan to be a foundational document that helps to guide CWP Update 2009 and also future Update efforts. A participant thanked DWR and CCP for their continuing efforts, and explained that he knew Caltrans was already interested in learning from the TCC's Communication Plan and the CWP's experience. Another participant commented that his Tribe was pleased to receive a Regional Workshop invitation, and would pass it along to other Tribes in Northern California and Oregon.

Participants then discussed the draft Communication Plan that had been revised since their last meeting. New improvements were suggested, and the group discussed the importance of different audiences. Participants also discussed general guidelines for the Communication Plan, adding (1) recognition of cultural differences in language and situations, particularly time as it relates to water years and flooding; (2) starting consultation as early as possible; (3) respectful communication between parties; (4) connecting to community issues; and (5) the need for cultural competency training. Participants also discussed the importance of the CWP crossing institutional boundaries and considering coastal and ocean resources, given their numerous linkages with freshwater resources.

Participants then spent significant time specifying the venues for different communication objectives identified in the draft Plan. It was noted that the review of documents by Tribal persons was particularly important. Participants also identified constraints on Tribal education, awareness, and involvement in the CWP Update 2009, which the Communication Plan must address. Key materials and sources of information for different objectives were also identified.

Finally, a participant expressed that it was important for the Tribes to develop legislative recommendations that would help their concerns gain traction. Kamyar explained that the CWP Update 2009 would include recommendations to State government, and to local water agencies, the water community, and water users in general. Although the CWP does not mandate action, in the past it has served as an important source of information and formed the basis of legislation passed subsequently by the Legislature and Governor. Kamyar and Lisa Beutler, Executive Facilitator for the CWP, then thanked participants for their participation and closed the meeting.